

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A unitized pinion seal for mounting between a first member and a second member rotatable relative to the first member, the unitized pinion seal comprising:

a sleeve including a first axially extending ring portion covered with an elastomeric seal layer adapted to mount rotationally fixed to the first member, a radially extending portion extending radially outward from an end of said first axially extending ring portion and a second axially extending ring portion extending axially from a radially outer end of said radially extending portion;

a retainer having a first axially extending portion slidably mounted to the second axially extending ring portion of said sleeve in a radial interference fit and having a second portion adapted to mount to the second member, said first axially extending portion having a smaller diameter than said second portion of said retainer; and

a seal mounted to said retainer and engaging said first axially extending ring portion of said sleeve;

wherein said retainer is disengaged from said sleeve during assembly of said sleeve on to said first member.

2. (original) The unitized pinion seal of claim 1 wherein the first member is an axle companion flange and the second member is a carrier/bearing cage.

3. (previously presented) The unitized pinion seal of claim 1 wherein the sleeve is adapted to install to the first member with a radial interference fit such that the radial interference fit of the seal to the sleeve creates a greater axial retention load than an axial installation load created by the interference fit of the sleeve relative to the first member.

4. (currently amended) The unitized pinion seal of claim 3 wherein said retainer first axially extending portion includes a first retainer ring engaging said sleeve prior to assembly of said unitized pinion seal to said first member.

5. (currently amended) The unitized pinion seal of claim 4, wherein said retainer second portion includes a second retainer ring engaging the seal body.

6. (cancelled)

7. (currently amended) A unitized pinion seal for mounting between a first member and a second member rotatable relative to the first member, the unitized pinion seal comprising:

a sleeve adapted to mount rotationally fixed to the first member, said sleeve including an outer surface having a ramp portion disposed between an axially extending forward cylindrical portion and an axially extending rear cylindrical portion, wherein said axially extending forward cylindrical portion has a smaller diameter than said axially extending rear cylindrical portion; and

a seal supported by a retainer, said retainer including which includes—a first axially extending portion which is mounted to an axially extending surface of the sleeve in a radial interference fit and said retainer including a second portion adapted to mount to the second member, said seal including a first seal lip engaging said axially extending forward cylindrical portion and a second seal lip engaging said axially extending rear cylindrical portion.